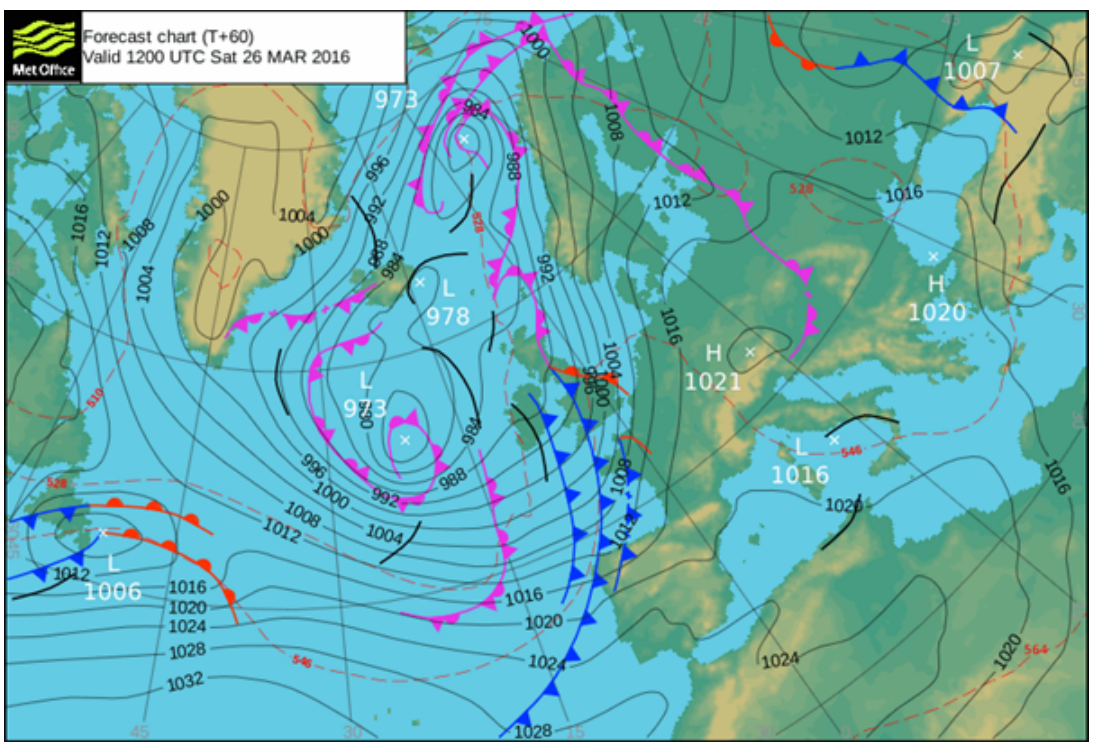
24 March 2016 - After a largely fine Good Friday, most places will see some wet and windy weather over the rest of the long weekend.

For many parts of the UK, Good Friday will bring plenty of dry weather, with variable amounts of cloud allowing for sunny spells. Temperatures will react accordingly and with highs of 14 or 15 Celsius likely, it will feel pleasant, especially in the sunshine. However, there may be some lingering rain in the south-east at first and it will turn cloudier in the north-west later, ahead of some wet and windy weather.

On Saturday a band of often heavy rain is going to move from west to east across the county, with the chance of some snow over the high ground in Scotland. It will also be windy with gales in exposed areas, these perhaps locally severe. Clearer but more showery conditions will follow later on, and some of the showers are likely to be heavy and thundery with hail possible.

A severe weather alert has been issued for Saturday. Deputy Chief Operational Meteorologist Dan Harris said, "An active frontal zone will advance eastwards bringing strong winds and heavy rain. Gusts of 45 to 55 mph are likely quite widely, with exposed coastal areas likely to see more frequent gusts of 55 to 65 mph.

"The largest rainfall totals on Saturday are expected over north-western areas. Here we're likely to see 20 to 40 mm widely and perhaps as much as 50 mm in exposed sites."



Surface pressure chart for Saturday showing frontal systems across the UK

Easter Sunday will bring a mix of sunshine and heavy, possibly blustery showers. Some further hail and thunder is expected and the showers will be wintry over northern mountains. The strongest winds will be in the north at first but some wet and very windy weather may arrive in the south-west later.

Most places should then start Easter Monday dry and bright, though the wet and very windy conditions in the south-west are expected to extend north-eastwards across the southern half of the UK. Gales could become widespread across the south and south-east with severe gales possible along the south coast, although there is currently a large amount of uncertainty concerning the exact track of this feature. Areas further north should be calmer with lighter winds, bright spells and only a few showers.

Through the following days some further showery weather is likely but things are expected to turn more settled for a time as we head through the week.

Patricia Yates, VisitEngland's Director of Strategy and Communications said, "Easter is one of the busiest travel times of the year, as 6 million people plan to take an overnight trip in the UK. With a mix of weather predicted, there is still plenty of things to see and do; whether it's a visit to one of the many stunning gardens across the country or a visit to the national marine aquarium in Plymouth. There is a wide range of inspirational ideas to accommodate both indoor or out, whatever the weather."

Robin Barker, spokesperson for South West Tourism Alliance added, "The South West is expecting a bumper weekend. Easter in late March will never be a time for lying on a beach, but that's not what holidays in this part of the world are all about - the last 30 years have seen a transformation in the region's year-round all weather attractions and eating places, alongside the development of wet weather clothing, winter wet suits and a growth in all weather activities like hill walking, storm watching and surfing."

If you have weather dependent plans this Easter break you can keep up to date with the forecast and warnings on the Met Office website, as well as through our Facebook and Twitter pages and our weather app.

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